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ABSTRACT

Policymaking is a subjective, cultural, and intellectually complex activity in a democracy and should be researched with the multidisciplinary approach. This paper focuses on theoretical implications of the multidisciplinary approach and on its opposing position, the structural-functional approach, in educational policy research. The paper briefly considers theoretical applications in New Zealand and in higher education. Educational policy is a contested cultural artifact of organization, and its analysis should therefore involve a range of disciplines. Education is a major electoral issue in New Zealand, which has called public attention to policy formation. The claims to truth behind such systemic terms as "a policy" and "the structure" comprise the current administrative elite's conceptual strategy. The traditional structural-functional explanatory approach to administrative phenomena justifies foundational ways of bureaucratic organization and culturally excludes individual subjective experience. Policy researchers should first understand the varying interpretations of the nature of organized social reality and should then explore education functioning as a means of policy implementation. The overdue research agendas have substantial implications for higher education as well. Educational policy research will function to identify ideologies evident in policy practices and outcomes. Over 40 references are appended. (CJH)

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TOWARDS CULTURAL, CRITICAL AND MULTI-DISCIPLINARY POLICY RESEARCH IN NEW ZEALAND EDUCATION

paper presented to the 1986 Conference of the

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TOWARDS CULTURAL, CRITICAL AND MULTI-DISCIPLINARY POLICY RESEARCH IN NEW ZEALAND EDUCATION

ABSTRACT

Research in progress is intended to provide the background to policy making in New Zealand education over the period 1980 to 1986. The purpose of this paper is to argue for the cultural, critical and multi-disciplinary approach being used. The general thesis is as follows: if education policy is a contested cultural artefact, if policy making is a philosophical, planning and political activity, and if policy implementation is about mobilising, managing and monitoring people, then policy research in education needs to select appropriate tools of analysis from a range of disciplines. Some of the implications this position has for policy studies in tertiary education are briefly discussed.

RESEARCHING THE POLITICS OF EDUCATION

In 1983 I began researching what it is to be a director general of education (Macpherson, 1986a) in Victoria, South Australia and New Zealand. It soon became apparent in New Zealand that while the philosophical, historical and educational contexts of Director General Renwick's work had been reasonably well researched, the politics of policy making had not. Thus the prior agenda had to wait for the political background.

Four fieldwork trips over the last three years and regular access to the public documents of education has reinforced the impression gained early that the politics of New Zealand education are about acquiring and using power. But as all leading players soon learn, with power comes enormous responsibility and risk. For example, with Ministerial power over central policy making comes the chilling wisdom of the House that "the education portfolio has long been seen as the graveyard of political aspirations" (Wellington, 1985a). Indeed, as the current Minister of Education put it, "there are times when you need your head read for staying in this soul-destroying job." (Marshall, 1986).

It is a fact of political life in the 1980s that education has been a major electoral issue in New Zealand (Wellington, 1985a, 1985b; Marshall, 1985, 1986). The public has become very concerned about the social and economic outcomes of education policies. All Cabinet members know (Prebble, R. 1986) that the government is expected to ensure that their educational agencies take coordinated and remedial social action. But the number and complexity of interests that have to be accomodated are so interwoven with contextual and historical factors, that academic disciplinary boundaries have to be crossed repeatedly to give a plausible interpretation of the political processes involved (Boag, 1985,1986; Galvin, 1986; Reedy, 1986; Renwick, 1984, 1985, 1986).

I can report that to gain the willing cooperation of politicians, administrators, educators and clients in education means that policy research has to proceed with some conditions as given. It has to have a multi-disciplinary basis. It needs to focus on the increasingly difficult dilemmas faced by those who make policy. It has to consider the action and perceptions of policy makers, activists and the public to understand the nature and consequences of participation. But it is not simply, or even, a matter of trading academic freedoms for access. A major point of this paper is that as policy making is a subjective, cultural, critical and intellectually complex activity in a democracy, it should be researched as such.

There are also other theoretical and methodological reasons for reviewing the assumptions and practices in policy researchers in New Zealand and other countries, especially those concerned with educational administration. Although there has been a paradigm shift in social and organisation theory over the last decade, bureaucratic rationality is still very evident in administrative practices and structural-functionalism still underpins most accounts of policy making in education.

When theories of public policy making incorporate a natural systems view of organisation, explanations of the reproduction and change of policies tend to dwell on processes without evaluating the values and the actions of individuals involved. While organisation can offer members moral absolution, policy research should not. The crucial point is that 'a policy' is a socially constructed artefact serving the interests of the dominant group or groups best able to control its reproduction

Rather than perpetuating the use of social systems and other functionalist approaches to policy research, it therefore seems appropriate that the cultural analysis of peoples' subjective experiences of policy making at all levels should be used to interpret how policies in education are determined. This means that before arguing the merits of policies, or synthesising the process techniques used in policy making, a prior task is to understand the variations in knowledge that exist about the nature of organised social reality referred to as 'education policy'. This focusses attention on how such realities are generated, sustained and changed by policy makers.

THE NATURE OF POLICY

The general pragmatics of policy making in New Zealand education are relatively obvious. Highly articulate and increasingly diverse interest groups are demanding more of the government. However, as the span of the education portfolio has gradually widened, as the sophistication of criticism has risen with the level of mass involvement in education and in the politics of education, and as the economic setting has worsened in the 1980s, the public has become even more critical of efforts made by those who manage the education portfolio and its services.

The practical reasons for expanding policy research in education relates to this context but will be attended to in detail below. Suffice here to predict that priority will (or is) soon be given to three purposes in post-graduate coursework and institute-based research in educational and public

administration. First will be the aim to help many more people understand the political, economic, cultural and organisational settings in which policy makers create and use educational policies. Second will be the intention to impart high level skills of analysis and sophisticated approaches to policy problem solving to as many interest groups and individuals as possible. Finally, it is presumed that such service will aim to foster a deeper public understanding of policy problems, as well as the nature of democratic conflict resolution in education and related portfolios. This argument, however, presumes we know what policy actually is.

Crucial to any disciplined form of enquiry are the nature of the key terms used to define purposes. Unfortunately, the term 'policy', like the term 'structure', has long had priviledged epistemic status in the theory and practice of educational administration. By this is meant that in the everday lexicon of school and system management, policy is a figure of speech used to control and legitimise knowledge about organisation. Such knowledge has been typically deemed, by such as timetablers, to be so crucial to the maintenance of preferred order, they are rendered beyond question year after year (Macpherson, 1985a). Similarly, at system management levels, the term structure has been found (Macpherson, 1985b) to possess a range of meanings used to reflect the selected purposes that ruling elites sought to embed in (and as) the concerted imaginations of organised educators. Like 'policy', 'structure' was found to be a rubbery social construct that was being sustained and regularly reconstituted through complex micropolitical transactions.

Three conclusions were drawn from this and related research. Converting the ideas that make up the notion of 'a policy' or 'the structure' from abstract to concrete status, was a major strategy used by influential administrators. Second, this reification strategy was being used to defend preferred assumptions against competing ideologies. Third, policy, as a concept, was found to be a dualism. While it served as a mechanism to support power bases and the current distribution of power, it was also providing a major means by which a metropolitan and centralist elite used power (Macpherson, 1986c).

These findings are well supported by research in schools (e.g. Gronn, 1983), in education systems (e.g.s Berg, 1968:203 and Frazer et.al. 1985) and in large public organisations (e.g.s Silverman and Jones, 1976 and Meek, 1984). Despite the steadily accruing evidence sustaining this constructivist and critical approach to understanding the nature of policy making, most researchers in educational administration still prefer variants of systems theory. Why is this a problem?

The structural-functional system of knowledge long used to explain administrative phenomena is foundational to orthodox ways of knowing and justifying organisation, as well as being culturally exclusive in nature. By 'foundational' is meant that the basic reasons put forward to justify assumptions about being organised in bureaucratic ways, ultimately regress to foundational premisses about order, efficiency, coordination and leadership. There are three major reasons for doubting this.

First, these premisses are little more than value-laden statements about organisation that have been given prior status over alternatives without explicit and reasoned justification. Evers (in Rizvi, 1985) has proposed a Quinean non-foundational epistemology to resolve the massive philosophical problems involved in the theory of educational administration, but as this work is still unfolding, further discussion here would be premature. Second, the truth claims of structural-functionalist theorists and kindred bureaucrats are those of a dominant culture that admits to the values of an alternative ideology with considerable difficulty (Bates, 1985). Third, in the world of practice, these truth claims mystify and ingratiate this domination by presenting organisation as a natural order requiring scientific management (Lakomski, 1985). The challenges to these aspects of the theory and practice of educational administration are gaining pace and will accelerate in New Zealand with the arguments of the Codd et al. (1985) collection (reviewed elsewhere, Macpherson, 1986e).

The New Zealand public is beginning to share these doubts. The premisses are becoming to be seen by policy makers, including the Minister of Education (Marshall, 1985), to reflect the cultural preferences of a minority group, namely one that is largely male, middle-class, Pakeha and socially elite or upwardly mobile. Indeed, a recent decision by the bipartisan Select Committee on Education and Science, with U.S. senatorial-type powers of inquiry, has been to review the quality of teaching. The opening sessions in April 1986 made it clear that they were going to question the premisses of professionalism and organisation. However, given that such

truth claims have long been given authoritative status in the orthodox theory of educational administration, and that they have been embroided with organisational myths and the rituals of practice over the years, their artifactual nature is generally long forgotten.

Hence the importance of policy researchers helping educational administrators to understand the problems that follow when members assume that their educational organisation has a life of its own and that their contribution is but to maintain it. Deskilling occurs. A second task is to assist with the demystifying of the organisational purposes actually served, by considering the cultural agency explicit in members' practices and language, and third would be then to think through the potential there is to serve other educational values.

To summarise to this point, it has been argued that the first general task for policy researchers is to understand the variations in knowledge that exist about the nature of organised social reality, as well as how such realities are generated, sustained and changed by policy makers. The hope is that participants in the policy processes of education will be thereby freer of hegemonies, and that the theorists in educational administration will distance themselves even further from the fadism, the inertia, and the moribund and dispirited theory "mired in the dogma of the sixties" (Holmes, 1985). The crucial point is that the traditional virtues of democratic administration have been swamped by the modernism of educational management that allows no place for the subjective reality of values. Knowledge about practice needs to be reformed.

KNOWING POLICY MAKING

Following Greenfield (1975, 1985a, 1985b), I assume that policies are not real in an objective sense and that they only exist as expressions of ideals. For all important purposes, when people decide their own priorities to any extent in a multi-cultural society, they will construe their existence and preferred educational policies in very different ways. Following this line means that instead of using traditional organisation theory to identify the roles, units, conditions and relationships that produce policy, I have been investigating how shared understandings termed 'government' or 'institutional policies' were reached by well meaning people in a particular context. It follows that useful data are the primary symbols in the language used to explain, contest and justify educational policies.

As the artefacts of organisation that ultimately count in a consequential sense are primarily reflective of influential people and their goals in multiple contexts, a particularly useful indicator is the metaphysical status of policies. By this is meant that the developmental form of a policy relates to the strength and the nature of a currently dominant coalition's commitment. Embrionic policy attracting limited commitment are still abstract ideas typically spoken of as 'issues' with even their constituent parts considered negotiable. Greater commitment is evident when 'proposals' are talked up after a 'kite flying' phase. 'Going firm' on one course of action removes negotiability, and when reified as 'institutional policy' the artefact is rendered as unquestionable as moral concrete. Policy implementation is thereby defined as being a

natural, right and inevitable process that will attract the support of all reasonable people. Further, what are termed 'long standing institutional and system policies' can attain the status of received wisdom. If they become central to the self-esteem of most members (as do promotion criteria and processes over time), they can even be deified as holy writ.

Hence, the approach to policy research advocated here would not only interpret the subjective meanings that influential people place on their action, but also offer insights into the rules-for-success that policy makers use to organise others' assumptions, cognisant of the multiple contexts. The question then is, what tools of analysis are available to understand how influential people construct policy?

Given the recent advances made to the state of the art of policy research in New Zealand education (Macpherson, 1986e), an appropriate approach is to consider the practice of opinion-leaders in education to be a form of cultural agency. This perspective not only assumes that dominant coalitions are central to the negotiation of knowledge about being organised and right, it introduces a moral dimension by presuming that leaders and dominant coalitions should be held accountable by society for the ends served by their agency.

But, in education, how do we judge rightness? Bates'(1985) answer is to give weight to socially-critical criteria when evaluating policy making and policies on the grounds that they are deliberately constructed and sustained through the dynamics of culture (myths, metaphors, rituals, language and ceremony) and through the systematic distribution of knowledge (selection

patterning, tranmission, control and justification). Caution is advised here.

As sometimes evidenced in the Codd et al. collection (Macpherson, 1986e), it is apparently too easy, when using a socially-critical perspective, to move too quickly from understanding the dynamics of making and elaborating policy, to deciding on the appropriateness of particular values served by the processes or outcomes of policy making. The moral complexities of the dilemmas faced by practising educational administrators appear to outspan socially-critical criteria.

At the policy talk-face of administration, it is a practical surety that an administrator's self-assured conviction of moral probity, which single-mindedly emphasises the administrative and educational remediation of social inequities, will, in turn, lead to the neglect of other public concerns, inattention to the legitimate interests of adversely affected groups, and to the overlooking of the need for loyalty to elected office holders.

A policy researcher's criticism of educational policy that gives undue weight to socially-critical criteria would be at cost to the use of economically-critical, politically-critical, educationally-critical and the managementally-critical values that senior administrators must consider. The constraints relate to the realities of being a senior educational administrator. Probably as the consequence of the multiple realities and the major problems of their work worlds, senior administrators have been found, in some crucial senses, to be many people. They appear to elaborate multiple selves, each

with its own system of justifying organisational and moral knowledge.

A 'Boswelling' variant of ethnographic research (Macpherson, 1984a, 1984b, 1985b, 1986c, 1986d) has found that that the central dynamic of being a regional director in Victoria (comparable to being a regional superintendent in New Zealand) was about the elaboration of multiple selves and their knowledges in pragmatic, socio-historical, political, economic, biographical, ideological and ethical contexts. Three co-existing, yet distinctly different operational selves were evident in their discourse and other actions, and so were labelled 'System Man', 'Structure Man' and 'Political Man'. Another self, 'Reflective Man', was the crucial, deeper, psychologically-organising self and philosophical realm of being.

The point of these, and similar research findings (c.f. Pitner and Ogawa, 1981 and Bush and Kogan, 1982) is that the real world of pragmatic eclecticism in policy making action bears little relationship to the moral unilateralism of a 'Socially-Critical Man'. The import of this position is that researchers should presume policy making to be extraordinarily complex philosophical, planning and political activities whereby the realities of being organised and justified are created, sustained, modified and terminated.

As these realities are essentially subjective in nature, and mediated by culture, primary data to be collected will be the symbols in discourse used by administrators and the administered

to explain, contest and justify the artefact known as policy. A framework (Hodgkinson, 1981:144-5) that comprehends these ideas begins with the axiomatic position that:

> Administration is philosophy-in-action. Philosophy, whether it be in the mode of articulated policy utterances of inchoate or unuttered values, is daily translated into action through the device of organisation. How? In a two-fold way. By means of administrative processes which are abstract, philosophical, qualitative, strategic, and humanistic in essence, and by means of managerial processes which are concrete, practical, pragmatic, quantitative, technical and technological in nature.

In other words, what often appear to be simply practical administrative processes of policy making, incorporate philosophical activities such as the articulation of values. As indicated above, once treated by the strategic activities of planning and politics, ideas of principle and consequence are taken from abstract realms to the conscienceness of people and, in time, embedded in their ideologies. Hodgkinson (1978, 1981, 1983, 1985) has related these policy making or administrative processes, and the ideal types that accomplish them, to the policy implementation or management processes in education. Mobilising, managing and monitoring service to 'organisational goals', by his account, provides phases whereby ideas of principle and consequence are transposed by diplomacy, leadership and consensus-building into the reified artefacts used to guide and evaluate performance.

All processes can occur at local levels. And it is not without irony that the very rigidity of these cultural artefacts (that permit an organisation to function in a relatively noiseless fashion), by their very nature, eventually precipitate challenges and other actions by those who would be educational

philosophers, and ultimately, policy makers.

Hodgkinson's taxonomy follows as Figure 1 below. It provides a model that usefully defines the scope and concerns of policy research in ways that are consistent with the arguments above:

ADMINISTRATION (Policy Making)	MANAGEMENT (Policy Implementation)	IDEAL TYPES (After DeBono)	VALUES TYPES	EPISTEMOLOGICAL REALMS
PHILOSOPHY	----------	Idea-Generators, Synthesisers.	Principle	Ideas
PLANNING	----------	Researchers, Information-Compilers.	Consequences	Ideas
POLITICS	----------	Explainers, Salesmen. i.e. Diplomats	Consensus	People
	MOBILISING	Communicators, Organisers. i.e. Leaders	Consensus	People
	MANAGING	Group-Organisers, Effectors.	Consequences	Things
	MONITORING	Detectives, Reactors.	Principle	Things

Fig. 1: Hodgkinson's (1981) Taxonomy of Administrative Process.

A comprehensive theory of value is now required to underpin judgement making about education policies and policy making, one that is consistent with the requirements implied above.

THE EVALUATION OF POLICY MAKING AND POLICIES

It has been argued above that a real problem for policy theorists is to explain and account for the complex moral

eclecticism of practice, rather than prematurely dismissing it as undemocratic or deriding it as uneducational. I acknowledge that it could well remain a vain hope that a philosopher might yet set aside the comforts of idealism and develop a theory of moral compromise for educational adminstrators. Nevertheless, policy research in education needs to interpret and then interrogate the eclecticism explicit in policy making practices. And for this latter phase, the researcher needs an eclectic theory of value that includes ideological and ethical frameworks, and one that is compatible with the model of the administrative process adopted above. The comparative rightness of particular actions then has to be addressed in terms of values served, or intended, if we are to allow for unanticipated consequences and the vagaries of fortune. This presumes a distinction between rightness and goodness, a distinction that needs to be justified.

Why should rightness be considered to be of a higher moral order than goodness? The first step is to distinguish between 'should' cases, by pointing to the intrinsic value of an action, like aroha or caring, and 'ought to' cases, like whakaiti or respectfulness, wherein an obligation exists to a defined moral community. For example, where administrators 'ought to consult' with those to be affected by their decisions, this may simply imply a current norm about what constitutes 'due process' in that setting. In contrast, to assert that 'administrators should consult' is to express a guiding principle, or in this case, an ethic of consultation, confident of the universal rightness of this form of administrative action. Hence the utilitarian logic of elevating the universal 'should' above

'ought to' cases, and of extending this into a continuum to cope with the shades of distinction from highly principled rightness through to hedonistic goodness.

This position presumes that virtue is still possible in a world of modernism, that it is more than the preference of unreconstructed Guardians and (after Barnard, 1972:272-8) that the creative resolution of moral conflicts is the most critical service given by educational administrators. Mindful of these assumptions, the relationship between particular values, their groundings, their psychological and philosophical correspondences and the epistemological nature of each is summarised in Figure 2 below:

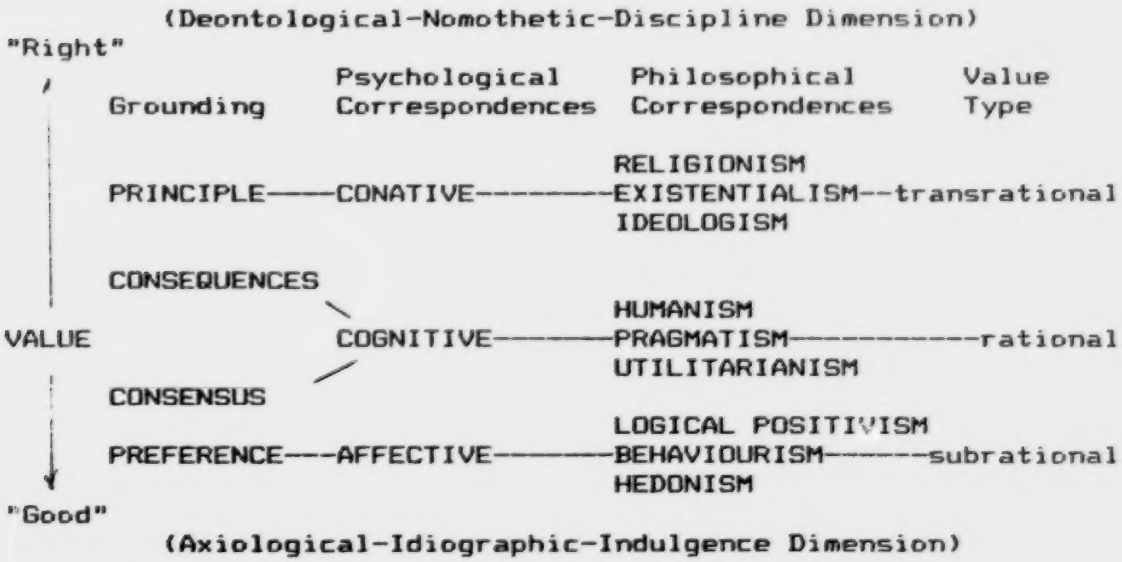

Figure 2: A Model of the Value Concept (Hodgkinson, 1978,p.111)

The practical situation for educational administrators is, of course, made vastly more complex by conflicts of interests. The literature of educational administration concerned with sources of moral judgement has been found (Macpherson, in Rizvi, 1985)

to give pride of place to two issues. First was the extent to which administrators felt constrained by or absolved of responsibility by their organisation and situation. Were they to be delegates of the organisation, or were they to be a trustee of education and let their personal beliefs guide their action?

The other major concern revealed by this literature search was the extent to which clients' comparative interests were considered to be adequately defined. The implications were clear. If comparative interests were defined by the processes of government, the delegate ideal-type would serve an ethic of management whereas the trustee would claim that the results of social science research justified holding to an ethic of educative administration while employing positive discrimination. If comparative interests were still to be defined by 'democratic' processes, then the delegate would use consensus administration to serve an ethic of public choice making. In the same situation, the trustee would use an ethic of principled opportunism to impart ideas in an ecology of games.

These findings, based on decades of literature in the founding Journal of Educational Administration, suggests that practitioners' moments of real choice making on policy issues often means considering all four sources of moral judgement and then having to live by an idiosyncratic ethic of moral compromise. While I will have to leave the philosophical problems to philosophers, my own research of regional directors and directors general of education has provided consistent

evidence that this struggle is a constant problem, and at times, terrifying in its implications.

Policy research in education, worthy of the name, will therefore incorporate value inquiry to establish what ends policy makers believe in and serve. Various tools are recommended, while emphasising that this issue requires systematic attention. A useful typology is that by Kemmis, Cole and Suggett (1983) as it sets out the consequences of curriculum ideologies detailed in three general orientations: vocational/neo-classical; liberal/progressive; and socially-critical. If democratic principles are worthy of identification in policy making practices, then Codd's (in Clark, 1981: 57-61) distinctions between educational curriculum and socialisation will prove useful. But the philosophical task in policy research does not end with the identification of values, however useful that might be.

The separate problem of <u>evaluating</u> the ethics of policy makers is a substantially more difficult enterprise as it entails at least five tasks: the mounting and justification of selected criteria that define service as ethical or unethical; establishing the extent to which each individual has degrees of autonomy; establishing that action or inaction causally contributed to what has been defined as unethical service; establishing that each individual has a dual duty to offer ethical service and to prevent unethical service, and; that the priority given to the client's interests, in the cases of a conflicts of interest, was ethically justified. Until all of these five conditions are established, it might be prudent for the policy researcher to withhold final judgment, however

penetrating the evaluation might be in terms of these five criteria. Pending advice from philosophers, I will now turn to the implications that this position has for policy studies in tertiary education.

POLICY STUDIES AND EDUCATION

Clearly, being expected to serve as an teacher, researcher and/or practitioner in education or educational administration, means a constant exposure to the pressure of differing views, values and powers. But wherever there is conflict between adults with democratic rights, political activity reconciles differences while preserving precious freedoms. In this light, education and politics deserve each other.

Hence the value in education of fusing pure and applied inquiry into curriculum development and other policy activity in school, system and academic settings. I label this activity policy research and believe that it should span the philosophical, planning and political activities of policy making, as well as review the management tasks of mobilising, managing and monitoring people involved in policy implementation.

It follows that policy studies in education means learning about policies, their contexts, creation, management and consequences. But, as argued above, I take the position that these studies are to be more eclectic than the traditional concerns of political analysis - the objective analysis of issues, processes and interest groups. Policy studies in education have to serve educative purposes.

Curriculum is a useful case in point. There is a widespread assumption in New Zealand that the valued knowledge termed 'curriculum' is basically objective and politically neutral in nature, or reasonably subjective in the Humanities and Arts. This is a dangerous myth in a democracy. Policy research in education has the tools to demonstrate that knowledge is constantly being reconstructed and changed by determined and organised people using social processes within historical, cultural, political and economic contexts. The point is that educators' practice should acknowledge that the knowledge termed curriculum is inherently dialectical and political in nature.

This point has been generally missed by New Zealand educators and researchers largely because of their commendable and abiding interest in chalk-face issues. But as Crick (1972) implied In Defence of Politics, it can also mean educators being manipulable and naive non-political conservatives, prudish and exploitative a-political liberals, or self-indulgent and doctrinaire anti-political socialists. To ensure that the politics of education are not governed by tyrannical minorities installed as political elites, and to revitalise public political knowledge so as to ultimately guarantee democratic freedoms, policy studies should have an important place in the pre-service and in-service education of New Zealands' educators.

Education is both an academic field of inquiry and a form of professional and lay service. By definition, in an educational organisation, a symbiotic relationship between teaching and research functions is ideal. This implies encouraging the involvement of educators in action research, consultancies,

public discussion and other forms of community service to the extent that their other institutional commitments will allow. It could also mean that New Zealand's university departments of education might need to offer more leadership in policy studies, reassert their traditional role as research centres and to consider devolving part of their substantial commitment to the chalk-face aspects of the pre-service education of teachers.

There are other pressing reasons for policy studies to be expanded in New Zealand education. As noted above, the economic and cultural consequences of education policies are major educational and electoral issues in New Zealand. The nature and import of these changes need to be researched and learned by those who wish to serve as educators. Second, as in all complex democracies, the New Zealand government is increasingly troubled by the expectations of the public that they take coordinated and remedial social action. It is therefore important to explore education as a means of implementing social policy.

With the exception of a government agency, an increasing number of academics and some interest groups, public understanding of policy making in education is at an early stage of development, despite the strong demand from the public service and from the professional and lay education community for education and research in this area. The groups demanding these services also made it clear that policy studies and research must proceed on a multi-disciplinary basis and help resolve the increasingly difficult dilemmas faced by policy makers. The range of possible research agendas is therefore as vast as it is overdue, with substantial implications for the tertiary curriculum of education.

CONCLUDING NOTE

The theoretical context proposed here for policy research in education proceeds from the answers to four crucial questions: what is policy; how will we know policy making; how might we value educational policy making and policies, and; how should policy research in New Zealand education relate to the tertiary curriculum of education.

It was argued that policy researchers should proceed with particular assumptions in mind: that policy exists as an cultural artefact of organisation; and that reification serves the current ruling elite by defending power bases and the current distribution of power, while also providing for the exercise of the dominant coalition's power. Further, as the premisses of organisation are the truth claims of a currently dominant coalition's culture, a basic function of policy research in education will be to understand how the control of knowledge about organisation and legitimacy selects educational ends attained.

As the ends intended will be evident in the cultural symbolism of language, in the myths and in the practices of organised members, it means that policy researchers will need to relate the explaining, the contestation and the justifying of policy to the distribution and salient features of knowledge graced with the term 'policy'. Central to interpretation will be the subjective experience of influentials, their characters, their multiple selves and their contexts.24

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Administrative processes were held to be the largely talk-based and philosophical, planning and political activities that accomplish cultural work. Hence, it was argued that policy research in education should also be a philosophical exercise. Tasks recommended included identifying ideologies evident in practices and outcomes, distinguishing between right and good values, establishing the extent to which policy makers are delegates of organisations or trustees of education, and, trying to evaluate the ethics of administrative dilemmas.

One consequence of the arguments above is the need for the collection and analysis of opinion-leaders' views of educational policy making from 1980 in central, regional, district and local forums. That task has been attended to since 1983. The findings will have to be presented and analysed elsewhere.

NOTES

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